

U.S. Funded Radio Stations Blocked by Afghanistan's Taliban

Tania Fils-Aime

16 December 2022

The [Islamic Fundamentalist group](#), better known as the Taliban, has gone from a rebellion to a functioning government. They regained their power in August of 2021. The U.S. had withdrawn the remaining troops as a result of their [peace agreement](#).

[Voice of America \(VOA\)](#) and [Radio Free Europe/Free Liberty \(RFERL\)](#), have been blocked by the Taliban. VOA and RFERL, both operated 24 hours, providing outside news information from the U.S. to Afghanistan. Its nationwide broadcasts have been blocked in 13 out of the 34 country's provinces. The [U.S. Agency for Global Media](#), a media agency that provides U.S. information and is connected to both channels, protested against this restriction. [Chief executive Amanda Bennett believes](#) the restriction "will be seen for what it truly is, an effort to restrict Afghan citizens' access to uncensored information." The Taliban believed information was failing to adhere to [their government press laws](#).

The [Afghan Journalists Safety Committee](#) (AJSC), has reported [radio has dropped from 320 to 200](#) after the Taliban came into power. The Taliban has also contributed to the economic problems by adding penalties "[in tax payments, frequency licenses, and commercial permits](#)."

U.S. Funded Radio Stations Blocked by Afghanistan's Taliban

Afghanistan is reported as [one of the top 10 illiterate countries](#). As a result, Afghans can't rely on newspapers as much as radio. Free expression isn't much respected nor encouraged if not in favor of the Taliban. Journalists are usually met with consequences. One reporter, Niaz Mohammad Khaksar, was beaten by the Taliban and accused of reporting "Anti-Taliban" content. Khaksar owns his own private radio station, [Enikass Radio & TV](#). He recalls [being hit repeatedly in his legs, stomach, and head](#) after being questioned about his professional background as a journalist.

Taliban agents detained 4 media workers around the Kabul District 10 where a protest was held by Afghan women. One journalist, Roman Karimi, was pushed into a traffic booth after his phone and voice recorder was taken by Taliban authorities. [He recalls being interrogated](#) about his intent on covering the protest and who he has worked for. He was then taken into a military vehicle where he and his driver, Samiullah, were detained. They were held for 7 hours, warned not to cover similar protests.

From this year alone of 2022, 38 journalists [have been reported killed](#) with a motive whereas 25 were killed, uncertain of the intent. That concludes 63 deaths in total of journalists in Afghanistan. There hasn't been much effort from the Taliban to stop the violence against journalists.